

Backcountry Camping Trip Guide

One Night

National Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior
Shenandoah National Park
Emergency: 1-800-732-0911



Moormans River Loop

Standard - Circuit

Level: Experienced

Total Length: 17.3 to 20.3 miles

Trip Description: Excellent views, swimming holes

Entry: 94 MP - Turk Gap

Exit: 94 MP - Turk Gap

Map(s): PATC #11 South District

Day One

Campsite: AT (3E) Blackrock Gap - Jarman Gap - backcountry

10.5 to 11.5 miles

From Turk Gap Parking get on the Appalachian Trail (AT), hiking north.

Hike north on the AT 7.9 miles.

Turn right, hiking down North Fork Moormans River Road (NFMR) for 1.4 miles to the park boundary and exit the park (all gravel road).

Continue on NFMR another 0.8 mile and re-enter the park. Note: Bear right when the gravel road splits. If in doubt, follow the river downstream and you can't get lost.

NFMR becomes a trail upon re-entering the park (it is still an old road with an interesting history). Look for a campsite any time after Shop Run, ¼ mile into the park.

Day Two

Campsite: North Fork Moormans River - backcountry

8.8 to 9.8 miles

Continue hiking downstream on NFMR another 1.6 to 2.6 miles (total on NFMR is 5.2 miles).

You will exit the park again while in the Charlottesville Reservoir area. Continue following the main road and the river; when you reach a sizeable gravel parking area, go to the river and look across the river for the yellow gate marking South Fork

Moormans River Road (SFMR) on the other side.

Cross the river and hike up SFMR 4.0 miles (if in doubt, follow the river upstream).

Turn right onto the AT, hiking north 3.3 miles to Turk Gap.

Notes

There are several stream crossings on Moormans River and the water can be knee to waist high in the spring and after heavy rains! On the plus side, there are several wonderful swimming holes on NFMR and one jewel of a hole on SFMR, making this a great summer trip.

NFMR is seldom camped. Give yourself time and daylight to find a legal campsite. There are some places to pitch your tent, but you'll have to look for them.

Options

Option for shorter second day – 5.8 to 6.8 miles

Begin the same as above on NFMR, but only hike up SFMR Road 2.1 miles.

Turn right onto Turk Branch Trail and hike 2.1 miles to Turk Gap.